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AIAIT-AN (381a)

4 Nov 87

MEMORANDUM FOR: NIO-GPF (CAPT Holme)

SUBJECT: (C/NF) Addressing the TOR for the Greco-Turkish Balance NIE

(C/NF) The following Roman Numerals correspond to questions asked in the Terms of Reference portion of NIE on Greek-Turkish Military Balance.

I. (C/NF) The paper examines the balance between Greece and Turkey and explains the capabilities and limitations of both potential antagonists. It examines the forces relevant to an Aegean balance and how they may potentially be employed.

II. (C/NF) The paper examines how and why the balance has changed since 1974 and shows how both sides are prepared --or not prepared-- to confront each other in the Aegean and on Cyprus.

a. (C/NF) The paper will show anticipated improvements in the defense structures of both nations through 1992. The paper will make an estimate of how much modernization will occur in the next five years and examine a number of constraints on the ability of both Greece and Turkey to achieve modernization goals.

b. (C/NF) The paper will address the domestic political requirements in each nation and how they affect defense spending. Basically, the populations of both nations are supportive of the military. The Greco-Turkish disputes transcend politics in Greece and there is a national agreement that there is a Turkish threat. In Turkey, the general population is extremely supportive of the armed forces. Only a general political upheaval in Turkey ---like that which occurred in the late seventies--- could upset current long-term modernization goals.

c. (S/NF) Outside military assistance is the major influence on the military balance between Greece and Turkey. U.S. FMS assistance, and the 7 - 10 ratio has been primarily responsible for the military balance as it exists today. The FRG, to a lesser extent also contributes to maintaining the balance between Greece and Turkey.

d. (S/NF) Greece, through its militarization of the eastern islands and its improved defenses in Thrace has established a balance between itself and Turkey that is generally believed to be capable of protecting Greek territory against a Turkish attempt to seize any large portion of it. Greece probably has a better air force than Turkey and can probably deploy --on short notice--- more naval units in the Aegean than Turkey. Greece cannot do much more to upset the balance as it exists today. Turkey also is limited in what it can do to upset the current balance between itself and Greece. Over a period of time ---a decade or so--- Turkey will become militarily stronger than it is

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now. This will be the result of the overall modernization of its military forces. Otherwise, Turkey's approach to Greece has been relatively low-key and this analyst has not determined any evidence of a specific Turkish intention to seriously prepare for a Greco-Turkish war that has as its ultimate aim the seizure and retention of Greek sovereign territory.

III.

a. (S/NF) It appears that the Greek and Turkish ability to clearly understand the capabilities of each other is rather limited. They are restrained by their intelligence collection capabilities vis-a-vis each other. This conclusion is somewhat apparent as a result of DAO reporting of Greco-Turkish perceptions vis-a-vis each other and this analyst's limited contact with Greek and Turkish military officers. It appears --and this is an educated guess-- that both Greece and Turkey, have a tendency to overestimate each other's military capabilities. This is good! It acts as a moderating factor against going to war with each other. Overall, it appears that Greek intelligence of Turkish force dispositions is better than Turkish intelligence of Greek force dispositions.

b. (C/NF) Greco-Turkish psychology is a crucial and very difficult factor to analyze. The Turks have along historical experience in dealing with the Greeks and don't trust Greek intentions. Ankara feels that Greece has been after Turkey since the early 1800s in the sense of first establishing an independent state at the expense of the Ottoman Empire and then pursuing irredentist goals against that empire in order to incorporate additional Greek-populated territories into the new Greek state. Greek irredentist aspirations were basically put to rest as a result of Greek defeat at the hands of Ataturk in Anatolia in 1922. The Cyprus problem is --or can be viewed as-- the last chapter of the "Eastern Question." Cyprus is not a closed issue. The Turks cannot really afford to reduce their military strength on Cyprus because they feel that once the Turkish tanks are gone the Greeks and Greek Cypriots will eventually move against the north. The Turks may very well be right! The chance of moving against the northern portion of Cyprus would be very high --especially if Greece feels that it can simultaneously protect itself in Thrace and the Aegean. Turkish strength in northern Cyprus is a key factor in a great Aegean balancing act. A Greco-Turkish war initiated by Greece in the Aegean could result in a Turkish occupation of all of Cyprus. The Greeks are aware of that and it is a major moderating influence that should tend to preclude them from being anxious to start hostilities in the Aegean. Although Turkish military activities have been relatively low-key in the Aegean, there is evidence that the Turks are becoming increasingly concerned about the Greek threat. The Turkish armed forces cannot afford to be embarrassed by Greece in a Greco-Turkish conflict. The Turkish people would not understand that! In a war with Greece, the Turkish military runs the risk of suffering a blow to its prestige that it cannot afford. Therefore, in recent years Turkey appears to be placing a greater emphasis on being able to defend its interests in the Aegean.

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Basically, Greece and Turkey are wary of each other. The Turks are in a poor position because they cannot afford the political repercussions of being perceived of initiating a war with Greece. They feel --perhaps correctly so-- that Greece, a Christian country with strong ties to the west in terms of history and culture, will have a great advantage in terms of generating propaganda and world-wide support in a Greco-Turkish conflict.

IV. (S/NF) The continuation of a military balance between Greece and Turkey will tend to deter war in the Aegean. However, this analyst believes that Turkey, even if it was more powerful by a large margin than Greece in the Aegean and in Thrace, would have no logical reason to initiate a war with Greece. The limited gains vis-a-vis the major risks are simply too great. The Greeks, for their part, will never be able to do much more than protect their interests in Thrace and the Aegean against Turkey. Today, the Greeks are probably more capable than they have ever been to defend their interests against Turkey. The Greeks perceive a definite threat from Ankara and their current military capabilities makes them feel better about their security. Today, the Greeks may be less hesitant to engage Turkey in a war because of their improved capabilities. However, the Greeks understand that they cannot prevail against Turkey in a lengthy war and further understand that any Greco-Turkish war may ultimately involve Cyprus and the potential occupation of all of that island by Turkish forces. The Greeks, although they won't admit it, are already guilty enough about Cyprus. They have no desire to be responsible for creating a situation whereby the Greek Cypriot population in southern Cyprus is subjected to another Turkish invasion. A Turkish invasion of southern Cyprus today would far-and-away cause much more loss of life and destruction of property than occurred in 1974. Basically in 1974, the Greeks could not really resist the Turkish invasion and therefore loss of life and property was limited. Today, with a mobilized GCNG of 50,000+, in addition to the 160 armored 90mm gun Cascavels of the GCNG and other improved capabilities in anti-tank and artillery weapons, war on Cyprus would insure a vicious conflict in which the Turks would nevertheless ultimately prevail.

a. (S/NF) In a sense, it is difficult to determine if the pursuit of a military balance has made the region more or less stable. Greece could not go to war against Turkey in 1974 over the Cyprus crisis. The Turks at least suspected as much and this was likely a factor favoring invasion of Cyprus. A crisis in Cyprus today that led to a Turkish invasion of the Greek Cypriot south would almost surely result in a Greco-Turkish war in the Aegean. However, today there is no reason for the Turks to contemplate an invasion of southern Cyprus --unless they were involved in a war with Greece in the Aegean. The potential for an Aegean conflict is higher today than in 1974 because of the relative balance which exists between Greece and Turkey and Greece's declared determination to insure that its perceived rights in the Aegean are not compromised by Greek-perceived Turkish expansionist designs. Both sides, due to the balance which currently exists, recognize the need to exercise care in the Aegean. Due to the balance which exists today, it is

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likely that neither side will be able to prevail against the other in an Aegean war. The Turkish perception of Greek capabilities are such that Turkey probably feels that there is nothing of any particular worth to gain and probably much to lose in a war with Greece. Greece, in a short war with Turkey stands to regain an element of self-esteem by standing up to the Turkish giant. Greece probably hopes that the western powers would not permit Turkey to retain any Greek sovereign territory that Turkey managed to occupy in a Greco-Turkish war. In any case, Greece feels that NATO and the U.S. would likely be forced to immediately intervene in a Greco-Turkish war and that such a war would therefore be of short duration. If Greece can claim a higher number of successes in the air and at sea than Turkey can, then the Greeks will see a short Greco-Turkish war as a victory for them. If, on the other hand, Turkey inflicts greater damage upon Greece than it receives in turn, the Greeks will fall back on the fact that Turkey is a nation with a much larger population and military and that it is nevertheless to Greece's credit that it stood up to Turkey. Due to the U.S. maintenance of a 7 - 10 ratio over the last decade in aid to Greece and Turkey, a balance has been created whereby Turkey cannot arbitrarily attack Greece with the possibility of realizing rapid gains in either Thrace or the Aegean. Greco-Turkish hostilities, if they ever occur, will likely be inconclusive in military terms and only serve to heighten animosities on both sides of the Aegean.

b. (C/NF) International fora, including NATO, have tried to distance themselves from the Greco-Turkish disputes in the Aegean. They will likely continue to do so. On Cyprus, the Greek Cypriots enjoy the moral edge in their position vis-a-vis the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Nicosia is recognized in the U.N. as the legitimate government of Cyprus. Numerous U.N. resolutions call for the withdrawal of Turkish Mainland Army forces from northern Cyprus. No state, other than Turkey, has yet recognized the government of the TRNC. Although the USSR would like to become more involved in the Cyprus problem, the Turks want nothing to do with them and therefore the USSR is not likely to become a key player in any potential settlement. International fora will not become more involved in Greco-Turkish differences than they are today. The only chance for greater involvement would be as a result of a Greco-Turkish war.

c. (S/NF) In Greece, the government of Andreas Papandreu has increased the domestic perception of the Turkish threat since coming to power in 1981. In Turkey, President Evren, and to a lesser extent, Prime Minister Ozal, have been relatively low-key in their approach to the issues that separate Athens and Ankara. The GOT, while supportive of President Denktash and the TRNC, has sought not to heighten tensions between the two Cypriot communities and at times has intervened to preclude President Denktash from taking actions --such as the repopulation of Varosha-- that would increase tensions. The GOT is supportive of reaching a solution on Cyprus in accordance with the draft framework developed by the U.N. Secretary General and rejected by the Greek Cypriot government of President Spiros Kyprianou. The Turks feel that they and the TRNC hold the upper-hand in Cyprus and are prepared to wait the

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situation out until the political atmosphere in southern Cyprus changes as a result of the election of a new government that will be more amenable to entering negotiations with the TRNC for the resolution of the Cyprus problem. In the Aegean, the GOT has consistently called for bi-lateral negotiations between Ankara and Athens concerning their differences. Greece, since 1981 and until after the March 1987 crisis, had rejected all such overtures on the part of Turkey claiming that there was nothing to discuss. Since March 1987, Prime Minister Papandreou and Prime Minister Ozal have been exchanging letters concerning the continental shelf issue. Prime Minister Ozal has not as yet ruled out eventually taking the problem to the International Court in accordance with Greece's wish. This is a small beginning brought about by the March 1987 crisis. Military planners in Greece take the possibility of a potential Greco-Turkish war very seriously. Over the last decade, the Greek military has been task-structured to defend Greece against a potential Turkish attack. In the last several years, Turkish military planners have begun to take the possibility of war with Greece more seriously. However, Turkish force dispositions have not radically changed and modernization efforts, although perceived by Greece as an expanding threat, generally conform to Turkish requirements within the context of Turkey's NATO mission. Although there can be no doubt that Turkey now has plans for a potential war with Greece, there is scant evidence to suggest any massive preparations on the part of the TGS to be instantly prepared to implement an invasion of a major Greek island or even an invasion of Thrace. Greece, for its part, appears to be virtually instantly prepared to implement its war plans for the defense of Greece in the event of a Greco-Turkish war. This was readily apparent in March 1987. The Greeks took the crisis much more seriously than the Turks did and, according to the reporting received during and after the crisis, made much greater preparations for conflict than did Turkey.

d. (C/NF) The issue dividing Greece and Turkey that appears to have the greatest chance of setting off a Greco-Turkish conflict is each nation's perception of its rights on the continental shelf issue. Any attempt on the part of Greece to implement research or drilling operations beyond the territorial waters of its islands will be met by similar Turkish operations in the disputed waters of the Aegean. If the Greeks, as it appeared they were prepared to do in March 1987, took action against Turkish research vessels; the result would be a Greco-Turkish war.

e. (S/NF) U.S. and NATO nation political intervention in the midst of a crisis that has the potential for war, could have a beneficial effect on soothing tensions between Greece and Turkey. The Greeks, during the March 1987 crisis, made a determined attempt to inform U.S. representatives in Greece of the seriousness of the situation and the possible ramifications of events as they were progressing. It appears that the Greeks did not want a war in March 1987 any more than Turkey did. However, the Greeks realized that they could become victims of their own propaganda and rhetoric and find themselves embroiled in a war with Turkey. Turkey, regardless of the correct relations that it maintains with Moscow, is extremely wary of Soviet

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intentions. Turkey is and will remain concerned about the potential opportunities that a Greco-Turkish war could create for Moscow. Turkey, likewise is distrustful of Bulgaria, Turko-Bulgarian relations are at an all-time low as a result of "Bulgarization" of the ethnic Turkish population in Bulgaria. The apparent excellent current state of Greco-Bulgarian relations, coupled with the visit of Foreign Minister Papoulias to Sofia during the March 1987 crisis subsequent high-level visits of Greek officials to Bulgaria are the cause of extreme concern for Turkey. Turkey fears the power of the so-called Greek lobby in America and probably suspects that American support of Turkey in a Greco-Turkish war, especially if the U.S. perceives that Turkey instigated the war, or that more appropriate actions on the part of Turkey could have avoided it, will tend to be supportive of Athens vice Ankara. With regards to the potential Soviet threat, Turkey, although confident of the U.S. commitment to its security under normal circumstances, is not as confident of that commitment as it used to be prior to the Cuban Missile crisis. A Greco-Turkish war could potentially open a Pandora's Box of troubles that Turkey has no desire to investigate, or even take a peek at. Both Greece and Turkey would probably welcome the political intervention of the U.S. and key NATO allies such as the FRG in smoothing over a confrontation situation that had the potential for rapid escalation into a shooting war.

V. (C/NF) Greco-Turkish differences have adversely affected the security of the southeast flank and therefore NATO. Although the majority of the recent weapons improvements in the Turkish armed forces have been generally deployed to conform to NATO defensive strategy. This is not the case for the Greeks. The Greeks have deployed the majority of their active duty forces to deal with the Turkish threat in Thrace and in the Aegean. Although a substantial portion of the Greek forces deployed in Thrace and Macedonia can be repositioned to resist a Pact attack within a few weeks time, the ability of Greece to rapidly respond to such a threat has diminished.

a. (C/NF) There are not going to be any radically "different conditions of balance" between Greece and Turkey over the next five years. Even if the 7 - 10 ratio is maintained over the foreseeable future, Turkey, due to its size, and its own internal efforts at improving its armaments industries, will begin to become increasingly more powerful than Greece in terms of its overall capabilities and the forces that could be potentially committed to an Aegean war. Greece, already under a terrific economic strain vis-a-vis the national funds already committed to defense, and suffering in terms of decreasing military age, cannot realistically hope to maintain the relative balance that it now enjoys against Turkey indefinitely into the next century. Under these changing circumstances Greece should become increasingly less anxious to confront Turkey military in the Aegean or in Thrace. If Greco-Turkish differences continue to persist into the next century, then Greece could be comforted by U.S. and NATO military assistance aimed at improving its defensive capabilities against tanks and aircraft. As Greece becomes weaker vis-a-vis Turkey, the likelihood of war should decrease and the willingness of Greece to enter into negotiations aimed at settling its disputes with Turkey should increase.

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b. (S/NF) Without the Greco-Turkish disputes in the Aegean and over Cyprus, it is likely that Greece would have never been galvanized into expanding the capabilities of its armed forces to the point that they have been expanded today. The improvements in the Greek Air Force and Navy have benefitted NATO in that a great deal of flexibility exists regarding the employment of these assets. Even though they may be currently oriented against the Turkish threat, these forces can quickly and easily be redeployed to meet a Pact threat to Greece. Although a large portion of the Greek Army is indeed permanently stationed on the six major Aegean islands, their equipment is generally of the older obsolete type that the Greek Army in Thrace and Macedonia used to have. The majority of modern armaments in the Greek Army, especially in terms of tanks, and artillery, can be found in Greek units in Thrace and Macedonia. Although Greece has lost the benefit of training with its NATO allies in recent years, it nevertheless is better equipped and trained than it has even been in the past. With the exception of the Turkish XIth Corps in Cyprus, the majority of equipment Turkey has received or modernized in the last several years has been deployed with the Turkish forces most likely to encounter the Pact threat. This is especially so in the case of the powerful Turkish 1st Army in Thrace. The potential ability of Greece and Turkey, either separately or collectively, to resist a Pact attack has increased markedly in the last decade. The Greeks are adamant in the maintenance of the 7 - 10 ratio currently in force. Turkey, for its part, cannot understand why the U.S. maintains the 7 - 10 ratio considering Turkey's willingness to actively participate as a faithful alliance partner which fields the largest standing army in European NATO. Turkey, although concerned with the significant percentage of U.S. aid to Greece vis-a-vis Turkey, is even more concerned in what it perceives to be the failure of the U.S. to provide an adequate amount of military assistance to Turkey for its massive modernization requirements. Turkey would like to see U.S. aid at the 900 million to one billion dollar level annually ---even if this meant 700 million dollars in FMS credits for Greece. Although unhappy with U.S. levels of aid to Greece, Turkey is more concerned with modernizing her armed forces to be better equipped to face the ultimate danger to Turkish security ---the Warsaw Pact. Although Turkey grumbles from time-to-time about potentially restricting U.S. access to base facilities, there has been no evidence in recent years that Turkey would take serious action to do so except on a limited and temporary basis in order to satisfy domestic political requirements.

c. (S/NF) Greece and Turkey, although appreciative of U.S. goals in the southeast flank, usually feel that the United States is not evenhanded in its relations between Ankara and Athens. They feel that the U.S., depending upon what side of the Aegean you are on, sides with the other side more often than not. This has been a delicate balancing act for the U.S. to follow. Greece has accused the United States of favoring Turkey with concessional interest rates and military assistance programs that Greece has not been granted. Also, in terms of the Southern Region Amendment (SRA), Greece feels particularly slighted that the U.S. has transferred 40 F-4E Phantom IIs to

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Turkey while offering Greece F-4ds and Cs. In terms of the SRA, Turkey is concerned about the 300 M48A5s that Greece is in the process of acquiring.

d. (S/NF) The prospects for the U.S. of achieving continued basing rights in Greece and Turkey are good. Greece cannot hope to maintain even a semblance of a military balance against Turkey without substantial continuous U.S. aid. Greece, as a result of its decision to acquire 40 US F-16s --and with the probability of buying an additional 20 F-16s-- cannot afford to distance itself from the U.S. thereby jeopardizing FMS financing and future support for these crucial air defense assets and other programs as well. Also, Greece is aware that the maintenance of U.S. bases on its soil contributes indirectly to its security vis-a-vis Turkey. A decision to close the U.S. bases would likely result in a number of them being transferred to Turkey with a corresponding percentage of U.S. aid that otherwise would have gone to Greece. Turkey, like Greece, is tied to the U.S. for its maintenance and modernization needs. So long as the U.S. attempts to be evenhanded in its policies regarding Greece and Turkey --despite the fact that the U.S. will be accused of favoring Athens at Ankara's expense and vice-versa-- the bases will continue in both nations. Both Greece and Turkey closely monitor and have input into U.S. use of facilities in their respective nations. Generally, U.S. peacetime operations in Greece and Turkey are not inhibited. The use of U.S. bases in fulfilling out-of-area commitments or "non-NATO" commitments will be restricted by both Greece and Turkey.



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